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## Essays, Expositions, &c.

### LOVE TO THE LORD.

"O Love the Lord all ye his saints."—Psalm xxxi. 22.

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might." So runs the first commandment. This command is addressed to all, be they saints or otherwise. All ought to love him. All are expected to love him. It may be said that many not only do not love him—they hate him. This, alas, is true. But there is no just cause why any should hate God. He is constantly good to all. "His tender mercies are over all his works." By him all are preserved and blessed. Therefore all ought to love him with a constant and a pure love.

But while many hate the Lord there are some who must love him. These are the saints—the Lord's saints. To them the words in our text are specially addressed. David was one of the Lord's saints. So many deliverances had he experienced, so many mercies had he received from the Lord, that he felt he must love him. Nor could he be content to love, he must also exhort his brethren to do likewise. "O love the Lord." Love him rather than self—rather than any creature. Love him with a pure, a constant, a supreme love.

"Love the Lord *all ye his saints*."

Let the young, the old, the rich, the poor, let all, without exception, love him. The exhortation here given is worthy of careful study.

I. It is REASONABLE.

II. It is NEEDFUL.

III. It is URGENT.

I. It is *reasonable*. We might be urged to do some things that are not reasonable. But nothing is more reasonable than this exhortation.

1.—*Let us consider what we have received from the Lord.*

Love produces love. Now God has loved us in a most wonderful, in a most earnest, in a most abundant way. We are called "saints," or "holy ones." Once we were unholy ones. We had no love to God. We turned from him and from his ways. We delighted in those things that displease him. Is it so now? Not if we are "saints." God has given to us a new spirit, new thoughts, new desires, new conduct. His Word has become precious. His house has become our delight. His name has become more lovely to us. Now we do

not seek to banish good thoughts; we grieve that we have so few of them. Now we do not neglect his will; we grieve that we cannot do it more perfectly. We meditate on holy things—we associate with godly persons—we long to grow in Christ's likeness—we are looking for the second coming of our Saviour that we may enjoy the glory and blessedness which he has promised to us.

This wonderful change in our experience we trace to the love which God had for us in Christ Jesus. It is reasonable, therefore, that we be exhorted to love him.

2.—*Let us remember the many promises which we have made to the Lord.*

Think of the time when we, by God's spirit, were convinced of sin. We saw our guilt, we felt our misery, we were conscious of our unworthiness. Then did we plead for mercy; then we did groan out our desire that God would manifest his favour to us. Our prayer was answered. We did feel then that God desired our love and we vowed to love him more and more. Think also of the profession of our love to Jesus when we were immersed in his name. That was a solemn act. By it we as much as said, "We now and here give ourselves to the Lord. We feel that we are not our own, we are bought with a price, even the precious blood of Christ. We feel that we must devote ourselves to him in a life of holy earnest obedience. He deserves, he claims our all and he shall have it without reserve. Since then there have been times when we have seen how imperfectly we have carried out our resolves. We have been made to know that our love has become feeble and cold. Once more we have mourned over our inconsistency, and once more we have renewed our vows of love. We are in danger of forgetting our vows. Many have forgotten them, we therefore need the exhortation "O love the Lord all ye his saints."

3.—*Let us remember the many enjoyments which we have had in the Lord's service.*

Never has our Lord forsaken us. As the loving shepherd he has gone before us, to provide for us all needful good. He has guarded and guided, he has delivered and fed us in a wondrous manner. We have had our fears, but he has been better than they all; we have been often in darkness, but he has been our light; we have been sorely tried, but he has given us comfort; we have often turned into the barren pastures of the world, but he has followed, restored, and secured us in the fold. Yea, he has led us into the green pastures of his grace and beside the still waters of his love. He has caused us to rest in quiet enjoyment. If we have to tell of soul depression, we can also speak of holy communion with God. If we have been pressed sore by our enemies, we have also been more than conquerors through our glorious Captain. Our mercies have always been more numerous than our miseries—many a time have we been constrained to sing—

> "His love in time past forbids me to think—
> He'll leave me at last in trouble to sink:
> Each sweet Ebenezer I have in review
> Confirms his good pleasure to help me quite through."

How reasonable then is the exhortation, "O love the Lord all ye his saints."

II. *The exhortation is needful.*

To some this may seem strange; young converts, for example, may not fully understand the need for such an exhortation. Is not Jesus the fairest among ten thousand? Is he not altogether lovely? Is he not the very soul of all that is good? How then can we know these things and yet need exhorting to love him? Alas! even these, if they live a little longer, will need a brother who will urge them to love the Lord.

1.—*Our love may grow cold.*

Against the church at Ephesus this solemn charge was brought:—"Thou hast left thy first love" (Rev. ii. 4). Is this an exceptional case? No. Many, very many may have the same charge brought against them. Otherwise

how can we understand that neglect of the means of grace on the part of those who at one time were earnest and diligent in the use of them? What mean that carelessness of conversation, that looseness of habit, and that indifference as to the kind of company associated with? How is it that prayer in public has become irksome, that secret prayer has been neglected, and that there is so little enjoyment in any holy exercises? We can find no answer to these questions but in the solemn words—"Thou hast left thy first love." We are all exposed to this danger. Satan is ever seeking to allure us from our Saviour. The world is constantly before our eyes in all its facinations. We have within us a most cruel enemy that every day seeks to enslave us to sin. Our constant experience bears witness that we are not safe for one moment, only as we are upheld by divine power. There is a need then for the exhortation, "O love the Lord all ye his saints."

2.—*None of us love the Lord as we ought to love him.*

David loved him with a great love, but did he love him as he deserved to be loved? I doubt not he felt his love to be very poor compared with what it ought to be. Few, if any of us, can say that we love the Lord as David did. In all of us there is much room for improvement. Think of what Jesus became for our sake, of what he did, of what he endured, of what he is now doing for us, and we shall feel that our love is as nothing. We sometimes sing—I would that we always felt what we sing—

"Where the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small,
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all."

The love of Jesus to us is an infinite love, our love to him ought to be the same. What need then for the exhortation "O love the Lord all ye his saints."

III. *The exhortation is urgent.*

David is in earnest. He does not say "It is desirable that you should love the Lord," or "you ought to love the Lord." His soul was burdened with the conviction that all the saints should love him. So he gives expression to his feelings in very earnest words, "O love the Lord," &c.

1.—*In loving the Lord we have clear evidence that we are his saints.*

Love is the essence of our religion. If we have it not we have no evidence that we are converted. The more we love God the stronger assurance we may have that we have passed from death unto life, from the bondage of Satan into the liberty of God's people. Men judge of us by what they see and by what they hear. God looks into the heart and judges of character by its state. We need to be concerned to know that we are prepared to do what our Saviour bids us, yea if need be to suffer for his sake because of our love to him. We are sometimes harrassed with doubts as to the commencement of a gracious work in our souls, but if we love the Lord we may have confidence, for "we love him because he first loved us."

2.—*In loving the Lord we become fitted for usefulness in his service.*

Love prepares us for holy service. As by love our Saviour was influenced in engaging to become our Redeemer, as love brought him to our world and led him through all his labours and sufferings that he might people heaven with blessed spirits, so love influences and stimulates us in all our labours for him. It brings us to feel a oneness of sympathy and interest in all that which concerns him. We love what he loves because we love him. We seek to bless whom he would bless because we love him. "The love of Christ constraineth us." Love sustains us in holy service. Our labours may be numerous, responsible, and arduous, but we are strengthened and cheered by the love we have to our Master. We can do much and bear much for one whom we love.

Love causes us to *look to the end* of our labours for the Lord. We may not have such success as we desire, but we know that Jesus will be pleased with our simple and imperfect labours, and that he will in the end be glorified by

them. This bears us up in the midst of many discouragements. Then love makes us *earnest* and *persevering* in his service. We shall not be intimidated by opposition, we shall not be soon turned from our purpose. We shall become mighty when our souls burn with love to God.

3.—In loving the *Lord we have the sweetest enjoyments.*

Some professors are miserable. Why? Is it not that there love to Jesus is cold? We cannot have close communion with him and be miserable. But love brings us near to him. It unveils to us his beauty. It opens before us the storehouse of his grace. It gives us a clearer knowledge of him as our Saviour. In this way we realize the "joy that is unspeakable and full of glory." When we love the Lord we cannot be satisfied with anything apart from himself. Our language will be "give me Christ or else I die." Men of the world may seek for good in the things that perish; they will seek in vain for satisfaction. We shall not desire ought beside our Saviour. We shall feel that he is all our hope and all our joy. Let us ask ourselves—"Do we love the Lord?" There is no question more important than this; there is no question that we should be more concerned to answer in the affirmative than this. If we do not love him then we must hate him. If we hate him the wrath of God yet resteth upon us. We are in a sad and in a dangerous condition while such is our experience. Let us count those our friends that exhort us to love the Lord. There are many who can counsel us in things that are of little importance. Depend upon it those are our safest, our best, our most worthy counsellors who urge us to love the Lord.

Before we conclude let us say one word to the unbelieving. You see no beauty in Christ that you should desire him. You ask why should we love him? Why? there is every reason why, no one has so just a claim to your love as he has; none can bless you as he can; you can never have true happiness until he is received by you as your Saviour. "Believe in him and you shall be saved." Then shall you know for yourselves that the joys of salvation are unspeakably precious. Amen.

A. A.

*B.*

## PATIENCE.

"Let patience have her perfect work."—James i. 4.

The above words were written by James, generally supposed to be the same James who was the apostle of Christ. They were addressed to those who were brought to a knowledge of the truth among the twelve tribes of Israel; but they are applicable to all Christians living at the present time, and will be, down to the end of time. If a man looks at the position in which those early Christians were placed, he will see that there was great propriety in the above exhortation. They had been converted to Christ, they had been born of the Holy Spirit, they had been, or professed to have been, sincere penitents, they had fled for refuge to the cross of Christ; they had been reconciled to God through the death of his Son, they had acknowledged Christ in all the offices and characters which he sustains—as prophet, priest, and King; and as necessary consequences, they had renounced the law as a covenant of works, or as a ground of hope, they had ceased to offer the sacrifices enjoined upon the Jews, they had ceased to acknowledge the Jewish High Priest in his official capacity, because they found all in Christ. They saw in the Nazarene, and the Emanuel their "All in all." They acknowledged that all they were, and all they possessed, should be appropriated for the honour of Christ. Such a practical acknowledgment would expose them to no small amount of persecution at that time. They might be taunted with the statement, "you have forsaken the true religion, the religion of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and you have become the followers of the Nazarene." They might be forsaken by their relatives and friends, they might have their goods confiscated (for some of the

early Christians preferred taking joyfully the spoiling of their goods, to losing the favour of God, and the glory of the sky); they might be cast into prison, or be called to die for Christ and his truth. That they might be sustained under such conflicts and persecutions, and that they might endure to the end, there was a necessity for patience. This grace would be specially tried. There is a necessity for patience at the present time. Christians who live in the latter part of the nineteenth century in England may not be cast out, they may not be called to loose their worldly goods, they may not be cast into prison for their attachment to Christ, and for their zeal in his service; but there are some ingredients of trial in the cup which they may be called to drink. They may be called to pass through a sea of trouble, of loss, of reproach, of affliction, and of bereavement. Then it will be requisite to "Let patience have her perfect work."

First, let us inquire into the nature of patience. All the graces by which Christians are distinguished have their peculiarities. They may have their similarities, but they all differ.

1. Patience is a quiet, calm, and resigned state in a time of suffering. An atheist that knows not God, that believes not his truth, may be called to pass through a sea of trouble. He may be fearfully misrepresented, he may be called to experience great loss or great bereavement, and he may be at his wits end. He may storm and rave like a maniac. To him it is all so much real loss. It is all contributing to his downfall. He cannot look beyond the grave, consequently, he cannot see that one particle of good can come out of the greatest loss which he is called to sustain. But a man that knows God and believes in him, a man who believes that "a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without his notice," who believes that God is too wise to err, and too good to be unkind, may pass through a sea of trouble; but he is calm and unmoved. He may feel much, but his hope is in God. He rides like a sea-gull upon the lofty billows. He may not understand the reason for the dark cloud, the great loss, or the heavy affliction, but he calmly waits to see the end.

2. Genuine patience is founded in genuine knowledge and genuine faith. Where there is no knowledge and no faith, there can be no scriptural patience. Faith and patience are often linked together in the sacred word. Paul exhorted the Hebrews to be "followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises." Let a man know that God is omnipotent, and omniscient, infinite in wisdom, goodness, and love. Let a man know his saving power and love, as revealed through the cross. Let a man believe that the heaviest strokes which God sends are designed to accomplish the greatest good, and patience will be fostered. "Tribulation worketh patience." Such knowledge and such faith may prove like oil upon the turbulent sea. The surface of the sea is moderated, and the mariner ploughs his way across the ocean with calmness.

3. As there are degrees in knowledge and degrees in faith, we are not surprised to hear that there are degrees in patience. One Christian is more patient than another. Job is proverbial as the most patient man. Two Christians may be found in the same church at the present time. One of them knows but little, and has but little faith. That he is saved by faith in Christ alone may be about the extent of his knowledge and his faith. Of the profound and glorious doctrines and perfections of God he knows nothing. He is called to pass through the crucible of trial. The temperature is high. His loss, his affliction, or his bereavement is great. He knows what sleepless nights and mournful days are. He thinks no man has such losses and trials as he. Everything is working against him, or going to ruin. He is tossed like a boat upon an unmoderated sea. His patience is but little. The other Christian possesses extensive knowledge and strong faith. He passes through an identical ordeal, a similar trial, a similar loss; but mark how he acts. He knows God and believes in him. He believes that all he does is right, that it is the best thing which could come, and that there is a necessity for it. His spirit is calmed and consolidated. He is patient.

Second, There is a necessity for patience. We may see it in the kingdoms of Nature, Providence and Grace.

1. We may see it in the truth that God's ways and thoughts are higher than man's. A thousand years to man, are but as a day to the Creator. A time which man with his meagre thoughts and conceptions thinks long, is but as a moment to God. He exists to all eternity. Man exists in this world only for a short time. God does not develope the kingdom of nature and the events of his Providence, and bring them to maturity in a moment to man. A bird does not hatch her young in a moment—she sits day after day and week after week upon her eggs before her young appear. The husbandman throws his corn broad-cast over the field; but he does not reap the following day. He has to wait for the sun and the rain. The corn grows; but it is so slow, and gradual that its growth is imperceptible. If the husbandman should look at it every hour, he might imagine it would never be ripe. He has to wait week after week and month after month before the corn is ready for the reaper. Yonder is a new born child. How many months and years must pass before that child is able to provide for itself, and before it comes to maturity. Summer comes. One man wants it to take its flight. He is wearied with the heat and with the length of the day light. How long the summer seems! Winter comes. A man is wearied with the cold, and with the shortness of the day light. He wants the winter to take its flight—but how long it is! A droughty season comes. The ground is parched with heat, the fields are turned brown, and many of the streams and pools are dried up. The barometer is frequented, the sky is looked at day after day—but how long it is before the rain comes! A rainy season comes. Man wants it to come to an end; but how long it appears before the rain ceases to fall! In the whole of creation and throughout the whole of life, the necessity for patience appears. If we take a glance at the history of the church we shall see that there has been a necessity for the "faith and the patience of saints." How long Joseph was in prison. How long the Israelites endured the Egyptian bondage! How long the two tribes Benjamin and Judah endured Babylonish captivity! How many thousand years passed before Christ appeared on earth! How long the dark cloud of Popery hung over England before the Reformation dawned! How long it appears to man before Christ sways his sceptre over universal empire! Truly, patience is necessary.

Again, patience is necessary in a season of affliction. A host of fears and fatal diseases attend and surround man in this mortal state. Some painful rheumatism, some lingering consumption, some burning fever; an inflammation may seize the body, and the man may linger in pain for weeks, for months, or even years. When the morning comes he may wish for the evening, and when the evening comes, he may wish for the morning. Such a man will know what wearisome days and nights are. How necessary will patience be then! Again a man may be called to suffer great loss of property. This world is marked by change and uncertainty. Hidden causes sometimes operate, which when fully developed, burst forth like a thunder clap. A bank stops, a ship is wrecked at sea, fire breaks out and destroys a large quantity of property, or a plague, or a blight appears, and all that a man possessed is gone. Job rises before the minds eye. He appears as "the greatest of all the men of the east;" but the dark cloud came over him. Messenger after messenger came, bearing more distressing tidings, like wave after wave. His sheep, his oxen, his asses, his camels, and his children were either carried away or destroyed. He was painfully afflicted and forsaken by his supposed friends. Job was patient. "In all this Job sinned not nor charged God foolishly." If a man should be called to suffer one tenth of Job's loss now, he will need patience; and if a man is to be a "follower of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises," he must be a follower of Job. A time also of reproach or persecution shows the necessity for patience. The church of God in past days, has passed through a sea of blood. Abel was slain by his own brother.

Isaiah is said to have been sawn asunder. Stephen was stoned to death. Latimer Ridley, and a host of others have been burnt at the stake. Multitudes of devout saints have been cast into prison. Joseph, Jeremiah, Paul, John Bunyan, and George Fox are among the number. Numbers have been tortured in other ways. Here are seen, "the faith and the patience of the saints." Saints may not be thrust into a dungeon or burnt at the stake now; but they may be reproached, or stigmatised, or buffeted. That they may stand true to Christ patience is necessary. The more they are tried the more patient they become. The arm of a blacksmith is strong because it is much used. The legs of a child become stronger by use. So we see how tribulation worketh patience, that is, how it increases it.

This article will be closed by a few remarks which strongly urge the spirit of patience. First, If a man should be impatient he "cannot make one hair white or black." However impatient he should be, the bird has still to sit upon the eggs for weeks before the young appear, the corn is months before it is ready for the reaper. The summer, and winter, the season of rain and drought, are not altered one iota by a man's impatience. If a man be patient he has all the more comfort. Again, a patient Christian recommends the religion of Christ. If a man can be calm and consolidated in seasons of great conflict and trial, he indicates that he possesses something more than any thing which earth can yield. Such a state a sincere man will be anxious to possess. In "The Life of the Rev. John Wesley, by Richard Watson," their is a narrative which shows the importance of patience. When Mr. Wesley was going to America to preach to the Indians, he met in the ship with some Christians called Moravians. Before they reached America, they had to encounter a fearful storm. The Moravians were perfectly calm while others were seized with terror. Whether Mr. Wesley was a converted man at the time or not, one thing is clear. He was convinced that he did not possess that strong faith in God which it is possible to attain. Patience in saints now, may be blessed to the spiritual good of others.

Lastly, If a man has no patience, where is his Christian knowledge and faith? A Christian has a knowledge of himself. He knows his sinfulness and helplessness, and he knows Christ. He may know something of the faithfulness and the power of God, consequently he is patient. If a man, then, should have no patience, where, O where! are his knowledge and his faith?

*Little Leigh.* A. SPENCER.

## WAITING FOR CONSOLATION.

BY H. WATTS, STANNINGLEY, LEEDS.

"Waiting for the consolation of Israel"—Luke ii. 25.

WHEN reading the account of good old Simeon, I could not help thinking what a number of God's people, to us unknown, must have been brought to the knowledge of the coming Messiah under the old testament dispensation. In the word of God, here and there, we have a few hints given concerning them; a few of their names perhaps, or a scrap or two of their histories, but of the great mass we know nothing. Yet nothing is more certain than that, under the old dispensation, God by his spirit gathered in his own elect. From Adam to Moses, and from Moses to Christ, thousands upon thousands were brought through the form to trust in the substance of the form, and were taught by faith to adore the person of Him who was to come into the world, and by his holy life and sacrificial death, crush the serpent's head. As a specimen of these "unknown ones," we have good old Simeon. He is brought before us suddenly and unexpectedly at the time that our blessed Lord was brought by Mary and Joseph to the temple, that a sacrifice might be offered for him according to the law. At this time the Jewish world was in a dark state; it was divided into sects and parties; infidelity and vain tradition usurped the place of God's word;

and the world at large, too, was dark and benighted. Yet, when this good old saint is brought before us, we behold him basking in the light of God's favour, receiving special communications from heaven, enjoying a great acquaintance with truth, and "waiting for the consolation of Israel." Oh, there will be a number of the unknown ones of the past in the better land. We think sometimes how, when we get to heaven, we shall gaze upon the faces of faithful Abraham, of wrestling Jacob, of the meek man Moses, of the sweet singer David, of the seraphic Isaiah, and of the many noted saints that we read of in old testament history. But we shall not gaze upon these only; we shall gaze upon many more. Most of these had companions well known to them whose names have not been immortalised in the Word of God; but whose names, and deeds, and sufferings have been recorded in the books of God's remembrance, and who are now receiving great glory. We shall see these too, and gaze upon their faces with joy; though we have not known them on earth, we shall know them in heaven. Then we shall find out that although they did not know *doctrinally* under the old dispensation as much as we know under the greater light of the new testament dispensation, yet that after all they knew *practically* more than some of us know; they knew how to live greatly in communion with God, and how to labour earnestly for God; all the while like good old Simeon looking out for the coming Messiah—waiting for the consolation of Israel.

But what is meant by Israel? Not the nation of Israel, for Christ's coming did not console his brethren in the flesh; of them we read,—"He came unto his own, and his own received him not." Israel as a nation rejected the Messiah, branded him as an impostor, and treated him as such. Rather I understand by Israel, God's chosen people of all ages. Thus we read in Romans,—"For they are not all Israel which are of Israel"—they are not all God's spiritual children that belong to national Israel. And again we read in the same epistle,—"For he is not a Jew which is one outwardly, neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew which is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart in the spirit, and not in the letter whose praise is not of men but of God."

I. Look at what this statement implies: it implies that Israel are *a sorrowful people.*

Consolation is the heritage of the sorrowful. To offer it to the cheerful and merry hearted would be nothing less than mockery. Now you will often find the Lord's people set forth in God's word as a sorrowful people. In Zephaniah we read of the Lord saying,—"I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord." In Isaiah he says,—"O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted; behold I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and thy foundations with sapphires." The Lord Jesus said to his disciples,—"Verily, verily I say unto you that ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice; and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy." And Paul even speaks of being amongst those who were "as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing."

But why are the Lord's people sorrowful? They are sorrowful on account of what they feel *within*. The existence of indwelling sin, hardness of heart, a sense of backsliding from God, a proneness to evil, sore conflicts between the flesh and the spirit, foul temptations, unbelieving suggestions, darkness of soul arising from the absence of God's joyous presence; these are things that at times believers feel within, and they make them sorrowful. Do you feel them? It is a sign that you are a child of God. The unconverted and mere professors of religion have no such feelings, no such conflicts. You tell me that you are afraid that you are no Christian, because you feel such things. But you are wrong, your feeling them is a sign that you are one. When people come to me and tell me that they feel dead, I tell them that that feeling is evidence that they are alive. If your little boy was to tumble into a pit, and then cry out "O dear, Mother, this fall has killed me; I'm dead," his cry would prove to you that although he might be badly hurt, he was making a mistake, and was living.

Dead people don't complain of the want of divine life, nor do they feel their need of it, nor pray for it. Then the Lord's people are sorrowful on account of what they have to endure *without;* the company of the ungodly; the ridicule they have to meet with at home and abroad; the aboundings of sin in their neighbourhood; the hard work they have in temporal matters to "keep their heads above water"; and sore family trials, bereavements, and divers losses, and crosses; all these are things without that often engender sorrow. They are also sorrowful on account of what they *see in themselves as a body.* Glancing around, they see the people of the Lord scattered; few, perhaps, are added to the church out of the world; an unfaithful ministry too often occupies the pulpit; professors of religion prove inconsistent, and bring dishonour on the Lord's cause; and the want of God's spirit is sadly manifest in the churches. The low state of Zion cannot fail to cause the right-hearted grief. It may not trouble the selfish and hard-hearted professor, whose religion centres in himself, and is equally as valuable. He will have no sympathy with the Psalmist when he said,—"If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning; if I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy." But if we have passed from death unto life, we shall show it by loving the brethren, and seeking after their associated welfare; their joy will be our joy, their sorrow our sorrow.

II. Observe the consolation they need.

The consolation they need is Christ. Good old Simeon was waiting to see Christ. Very beautifully has Dr. Watts set this forth:—

"With what divine and vast delight,
The good old man was filled,
When fondly in his withered arms,
He clasp'd the holy child.

"Now I can leave this world he cried,
Behold thy servant dies;
I've seen thy great salvation, Lord,
And close my peaceful eyes.

"This is the light prepared to shine,
Upon the Gentile lands;
Thine Israel's glory, and their hope
To break their slavish bands."

Jesus is the consolation of Israel, and we know of no other. He is the consolation of Israel, for from the first, Israel looked to him as the *predicted deliverer.* He was promised as the seed of the woman, to Adam in the garden of Eden. He was exhibited in types and shadows in all the old Jewish sacrifices. And when we come to read the testimony of the prophets, we find them constantly setting forth the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Jesus is the consolation of Israel, because *he has done for his people what no one else could do.* The best kind of consolation is not that which is *said*, but that which is *done.* You know the maxim—"Actions speak louder than words." And there is another equally as good—"To speak well is to sound like a cymbal, but to do well is to act like an angel." We want friends who will not merely sound as cymbals, but who will act as angels, and they are not always to be found. An old divine has said something like this,—"Some friends are like drums and flags in battle. As the drums are played they make a thundering noise, as the flags are waved they make a splendid show; but this is all they do, they don't help in the fight. So these talking friends, they tell us in loud tones what they will do; they lift on high the flaming flag of friendship; but when the battle hour comes, and we enter into the conflict, they leave us to fight for ourselves." But no friend of this sort was Christ. As the friend of Israel, trusted and tried, he gave both the consolatory word and the consolatory deed. He came into the world to save Israel from wrath; to give his life for his people's ransom; and to prepare them for reigning with Him in glory. Jesus is the consolation of Israel, because *he says to his people what none else*

*can say.* He works for them, and then tells them what he has done, and that is different from telling a great tale, after the fashion of great talkers, before the work is accomplished. He tells his people that he has loved them with an everlasting love; that He is theirs by the most endearing of all relationships; that He is their husband, brother, friend; that He will never leave them nor forsake them; that He has blotted out as a cloud their sins, and as a thick cloud their transgressions; that He will supply all their needs now and evermore; that He will give them his good spirit, to be their guide through life; and when this life is ended, they shall meet on high to be parted no more for ever. O these sweet "love whispers" of Christ; how precious they are to the believer! And what is best, the believer receives most of these love whispers in the time of trouble. I have heard music played upon the land, and the sounds have been sweet; but when I have stood on the sea shore, and heard the strains of a band of music wafted across the troubled waters, as the vessel containing the band was drawing near to, or receding from the shore, the music seemed to be sweeter far to me than it would if the band had been playing at my feet. It is so with the music of Christ's voice. It is sweet when heard in the paradise of prosperity; but when we hear its loving and melodious tones crossing the sea and floods of tribulation, it is sweeter to us than words can possibly express. Let me in the tempests of trouble hear the consolatory music of Christ's voice, and I care not if I am deprived of any other. He can say to me then what none else can say.

III. If we would have this consolation, we must be found waiting for it.

Israel of old had to wait fifteen hundred years before Christ came; but He came at last. We have not to wait for the personal appearance of Christ in the flesh, unless it be for his second advent. But we have to wait for the consolation of his spiritual presence. That we cannot command at any time. But though He tarry, it is good to wait for him, for saith Jeremiah in Lamentations, "It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord." It is good for us to wait for this consolation, in order that we may feel how much we need it. A man never values food more than when he has been a long time without it, and has become thoroughly hungry; so, for this reason, the Lord makes us hunger after his consolation before he imparts it. The longer we wait, the more precious will it prove to be when it comes. Treasures that drop into the hand before we need them will not be greatly prized; but when we have wrestled hard for them, and obtained them, they become to us invaluable. But how are we to wait? We may make mistakes about this matter. Some suppose that by waiting we are to sit down in idleness, and make no movement whatever. But that is not the scriptural notion of waiting. The scriptural notion of waiting *for* God includes the idea of waiting *upon* God. If you sit down and use no means, you are no real waiter. To wait for God in a scriptural sense, is to wait upon God by seeking him at the throne of grace, and knocking hard at the gate of mercy. Just as a man would knock at a door, and wait until the door was opened, and he could have an interview with the occupant, so are we to wait for God and upon God. Unless you thus wait upon the Lord, your expectation will be cut off. If, however, you do thus wait, you shall not wait in vain; what you wait for shall be granted. If we seek for the pardon of our sins, the Lord will show us by his spirit, and through his word, that our sins are pardoned. If we are weak, He will impart to us strength; if we are sorrowful, He will give us comfort; if we are cast down, He will lift us up; if we are ignorant, He will give us knowledge; if we are tempted, He will enable us to overcome the tempter; and if we are in great trial, He will grant us a great deliverance. No sincere seeker can possibly wait upon God in the proper use of means, without receiving at last the sought for blessing. Mourners in Zion, then, no longer hang your harps upon the willow.

> "God hears your sighs, God counts your tears,
> God shall lift up your head."

For you a brighter day is dawning. The clouds that have gathered around

you, and darkened your pathway, shall soon be dispersed. The sun of righteousness will burst through every cloud, and fill your souls with light and glory; for the word of promise stands firm as the everlasting hills. "Blessed are all they that wait for Him."

## A SABBATH IN A VILLAGE CHAPEL, WITH INTRODUCTION TO A SERMON PREACHED THERE.

I RECENTLY visited a quiet village in the neighbourhood of the great metropolis, where all was so beautiful that I thought of "Eden, the garden of the Lord." There were fruits in abundance, and flowers of all hues. Every thing appeared as if it was the abode of health and happiness. "If," I said to myself, "if there is a spot on earth from which sin and sorrow are excluded, surely it must be one like this." As I intended to make it my home for a few weeks, and the Lord's Day had begun, I enquired for a place of worship, where I might unite with Christians in such services as I had enjoyed for more than half a century, and of which I had frequently said as Dr. Watts, in his divine songs—

> "Lord how delightful 'tis to see,
> A whole assembly worship thee;
> At once they sing, at once they pray,
> They hear of heaven, and learn the way."

I was directed to a humble building, in which a few believers were wont to assemble. All was so simple, and the worshippers seemed so devout, that I said as Jacob on the plains of Padan-aran:—"surely this is none other than the house of God, this is the gate of heaven." The hymns, the prayers, and the sermon, were in harmony with this feeling; and as I listened, I thought it was perhaps, just such a scene as that which was visited by Barnabas at Antioch, when "he saw the grace of God," and where "the disciples were first called Christians," the name by which the followers of Jesus have ever since been known. I went again in the evening, but I soon perceived that there was something unusual in the service. The attendance was large, and some who were unable to obtain accommodation within the chapel, were content to remain outside the building, where they had no difficulty in hearing all that was said. The service commenced with a hymn which I had known from childhood, and it led me to think of many dear friends at whose funerals it had been sung. It was as follows:—

> "Prepare me gracious God
> To stand before thy face;
> Thy Spirit must the work perform,
> For it is all of grace."

I soon learned that this was to be a funeral service, and that many had come with the expectation of hearing statements relative to the daughter of a member of the church, whose sudden death had excited much interest in the neighbourhood. The preacher was an aged man, who, I afterwards heard had nearly reached fourscore years. His manner was grave, and the introduction to the sermon, though much longer than usual, was so interesting, that I venture to transcribe it, as far as my memory will enable me to recall it. "The voice of wailing," he said, "is again heard, for death is come up into our windows, and is entered into our palaces, to cut off the children from without, and the young men from the streets. When I first saw this lovely village, every thing looked so peaceful and happy, that I foolishly imagined neither sin nor death could find admittance." I was much struck with the remark for it was the very thought which I had indulged; "but," he went on to say—"it was fancy only. 'The voice said cry, and he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field; the grass withereth, the flower fadeth; because the spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it; surely the people is grass.' In less than twelve months," the minister said, "I have

preached no less than three funeral sermons for young persons who have been connected with this place of worship, and now I am called to preach the fourth. It reminds me of a period in the history of God's ancient people, when judgments had been displayed against Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, when 'the children of Israel spake unto Moses, saying, Behold, we die, we perish, we all perish.' Yet there has been no extraordinary visitation here. We have had no cholera, nor influenza, nor fever. The cause of death in each instance has been different. It has been what Moses calls, 'the common death of all men'. The first of these," said the preacher, and his voice trembled as he said it, "was for one of my grand-children. He had reached his twenty-first year. He had been afflicted; but afflictions were lessons, teaching him that he needed a Saviour, just such a one as he found in 'the Lord Jesus Christ, who is able to save to the uttermost, all who come unto God by him'. My text then, as some of you may remember was 'A time to die,' (Ecc. iii. 2), when I endeavoured to impress on you the solemn fact, that 'there is an appointed time for man upon the earth,' and that as soon as the time appointed by the Almighty comes, neither the skill of the physician, nor the affection of fond parents can prolong life for a single hour. But it was the mercy of my young relative, that he was enabled to say of the Lord,—

'I love thee, my Jesus, I know thou art mine,
For thee all the pleasures of earth I resign;
My gracious Redeemer, my Saviour art thou,
If ever I loved thee, my Jesus, 'tis now.
'I will love thee in life, I will love thee in death,
And will praise thee as long as thou lendest me breath;
And sing with the cold dew of death on my brow,
If ever I loved thee, my Jesus 'tis now.'

He seemed as he left us, to say 'If ye loved me, ye would rejoice;' and we did rejoice, for the battle had been fought, and through grace the victory was won for ever! The second sermon was occasioned by the death of a young man, rather younger than the one to whom I have just referred. He was not taken away by pining sickness, but by an almost sudden death. I had known and regarded him from his infancy. He was an only son, and was all that his affectionate parents could desire. You well remember him, the picture of health. His habits were serious, and I believe he knew and loved the Saviour. One day, we heard that he was ill, on the following day it was said that he was worse, and on the next morning, the closed shutters told the sad tale—that youth was dead! My text was, 'Are not my days few?' (Job x. 20). I said on that occasion that if those words were printed in large letters, and placed on the coffin, that all might read them, they would form the most impressive sermon. It was a solemn service to the bereaved parents. Only the rich consolations of religion can soothe their wounded spirits. We thought of their changed home, and of the empty chair, no more to be filled by him who had been so dear. The following lines seemed appropriate:—

'When blooming youth is snatched away,
By death's resistless hand,
Our hearts the mournful tribute pay,
Which pity must demand.
'Great God! thy sovereign grace impart,
With cleansing, healing power,
This only can prepare the heart,
For death's surprising hour.'"

After a short pause, the preacher said, "My third sermon was for a young and interesting female, the daughter of an esteemed member of the church. Her disease was consumption, that fatal but flattering complaint. Every thing which medical science and parental affection could effect was done, but all was vain. At times there were hopeful symptoms, and it was believed by some that she might yet recover; but at length it became apparent that she

was sinking under the stroke of the last enemy. My text then was—'O, death! where is thy sting?' (1 Cor. xv. 55). I had no hesitation in adopting the triumphant language of the apostle, as the dying shout of the departed, for she had happily realised her interest in Jesus, and could say, 'I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to Him against that day.' During her illness she often sang hymns of praise, expressive of her feeling. The following verse was much loved, and was frequently repeated by her:—

'Was it for crimes that I had done,
He groaned upon the tree?
Amazing pity! grace unknown!
And love beyond degree!'

"But this is the fourth time I have to address you on the subject of death! My other texts were utterances of Solomon, of Job, and of Saul. Now I come with the words of the Master, 'Be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh' (Matt. xxiv. 45). Another, near the same age as the other three is gone from us. You are aware that she was afflicted, having been for some years subject to epileptic fits, occasioned in the first instance by fright. Painful as the visitation was, it had been overruled for her spiritual and eternal advantage, so that she could say as David, 'I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me.' So true is it that—

'Many a foe is a friend in disguise,
Many a sorrow a blessing most true,
Helping the heart to be happy and wise,
With love ever precious, and joys ever new!
All will be right,
Look to the light,
Morning is ever the daughter of night,
All that was black will be all that is bright.'"

I had thought when I commenced to write the introduction to the funeral sermon, that I would copy all that I could recollect of the sermon too. It might have been a pleasant task to myself, but I fear that it might tire my reader; I shall confine myself therefore to one or two incidents that were specially interesting. The first of these was the mention, by the preacher, of an interview he had with the deceased only two days before her death. "I was present," he said, "at the prayer meeting on the Wednesday evening. She then seemed well, and likely to have lived for years. One of the brethren who prayed, had expressed his hope that all who were present loved the Saviour. I asked her when the meeting had closed, whether she noticed it. She told me she did. I then said—'Is it true: do you love Him?' She answered promptly, 'Yes, I do.' I said Christ's words are, 'If ye love me, keep my commandments.' She replied, 'That is my wish sir; I grieve that I do not love Him more, but I do desire to serve him." She seemed much pleased when I promised that I would speak with her parents respecting it. It was remarkable that had she lived two days longer than she did, she would have been of age; and she had always hoped that when she attained her twenty-first year, she would have no more fits. And it is so; the fits will never come again. The Lamb in the midst of the throne will lead her now to living fountains of water, and God shall wipe away every tear. There where the inhabitants will no more say, I am sick, the people that dwell there shall be forgiven their iniquity. It was an affecting fact that from parents and friends, there were many valuable birthday presents in the house at the time of her death; but she never saw them. And now she does not need them, for she has 'God's unspeakable gift'." The preacher expressed his confidence from all he had heard, and from what he knew personally, that "she was ready to meet the Bridegroom," and he said many kind words to encourage and comfort the bereaved parents and friends, and other words to excite the hearers to seek an interest in Jesus; that only

preparation which will make them ready to meet "the Son of Man at his coming." Many seemed much impressed with the service, and said as they left the chapel, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his."

I shall not soon forget my visit to the village chapel, nor the sermon, with its long and remarkable introduction. God bless the aged preacher, and render his remaining days happy, while seeking to extend the cause and kingdom of the Lord, and may God the eternal spirit crown with an effectual blessing the labours of all the servants of the Saviour.

*New Malden.* C. W.

# Poetry.

## LYRICS FOR THE HEART.—"FULL JOY."

BY W. POOLE BALFERN.

"These things I speak unto you that my joy may *remain in you*, and that your joy may be *full*—Jesus."

O SOVEREIGN Lord, thy kingly words,
Bring wondrous love to view;
And would'st thou have our hearts like thine,
As full of love, and true!

O *small* the joy which brings content,
To this poor little heart;
How large the gift, how vast the joy,
Thou waitest to impart!

We ask like children in the dark,
We scarce know what we say;
To us the joy thou would'st impart,
Seems often *far away*.

We view it as a *distant* sun,
Whose beams *just reach* us here;
Forgetting *all* is near to faith,
While thou art ever near.

We come to life's own springing well,
A *drop* we taste and live;
And speak of *this* as though 'twas all
The master had to give.

Lord, raise our faith to higher joys,
To larger views of thee;
O let us reach the heights and depths
OF LOVE'S own mystery!

## THE WIDOW'S SONG.

THE sweetest fellowship below,
Is with the saints of God;
I would with them my journey go,
Though thorny be the road.

When I reflect on bygone days,
There's *one* I now deplore;
My harp untuned—I cannot raise
One song of comfort more.

Alas! the loss of one I feel,
Who cheer'd me on my way;
There's none the deepest wound can heal,
I feel it to this day.

How prone I am to grieve and fret,
Against my Father's will;
So apt past favours to forget,
Though He is with me still.

Be calm my soul, submissive bow,
Thy husband's living yet;
Thy Maker is thy husband now,
He will not thee forget.

In every trial thou hast past,
Hath He not by thee stood?
Nor will He leave thee now at last,
But work this for thy good.

Has He not promised by his grace,
That thou shalt persevere;
Be brought at last to see His face,
Though thou art mourning here.

Why then not trust thy Father's word,
Though painful be the road;
He is thy ever living Lord,
He is thy covenant God.

Ah, Lord, I know thy word is true,
Thy promises are there;
At times I can my interest view,
Or I should soon despair.

Oh, come and reign within my breast,
Without a rival there;
Nothing on earth can give me rest,
Or can with thee compare.

I long, I pant to see Thy face,
And lean upon Thy breast,
There to live in Thy embrace,
And dwell among the blest.

Then shall I tune my harp afresh,
In sweetest songs of praise;
No more be pained at parting death,
Or mourn for bygone days.

*Little Leigh, Cheshire.* M. SMITH.

# Reviews.

*Peter Muffet on Proverbs: John Cotton on Ecclesiastes, and on the Song of Solomon.* Series of Commentaries. Edinburgh: James Nichol. London: James Nisbet and Co. Dublin: G. Herbert. Crown Quarto.

THIS is the first volume of the fifth year's issue of Mr. Nichol's Series of Commentaries. The second volume, to appear on 1st October, 1868, will consist of Thomas Jacomb, D.D., on Romans viii., and William Sclater, D.D., on Romans i.-iii. The third volume, to appear on 1st February, 1869, will contain Nicholas Byfield on Colossians. The three volumes may be had by subscribers at 16s. 6d., or separately at 7s. each. The volume now before us is of great worth. Peter Muffet is an author whose history is now utterly unknown. He was an old man in 1594, when the second edition of his commentary on Proverbs was published. He must, therefore, have been one of the Elizabethan divines. His name does not appear either in the *Athenæ* or *Fasti Oxonienses*, or in Tanner's *Bibliotheca*, or in Fuller's *Church History*. His "Commentary on the Proverbs," appears to have been his only published work. We cordially endorse the opinion of it expressed by the Editor, that, "It will be found to be sound and judicious, and well worthy of a place in this series."

Certainly, it contains no lofty or seraphic flights, such as we meet with in the pages of John Howe, &c., but it is written in a style of clear simplicity, sound sense, and scriptural insight. Peter Muffet says,

"The doctrine of the word is full of majesty and royalty, for it doth entreat, not of base arguments, but of divine and rare points,—as of election, regeneration, faith, and the glory which is to come." (P. 40.)

An exposition of the book of Proverbs affords but few opportunities of a systematic treating of the fundamental verities of the evangelical faith, but our author evidently held them, and introduces them in all appropriate places. His commentary will be a great help to any one expounding the book of Proverbs.

John Cotton is much better known as an author than Peter Muffet. He was born in Derby on the 4th of December, 1585. At thirteen he was admitted into Trinity College, Cambridge. Thence he was transferred to Emmanuel College, where he became successively fellow, tutor, head lecturer, dean, and catechist. Under the ministry of Mr. Perkins and Dr. Sibs, John Cotton was brought to God. His first ministerial charge was at Boston, Lincolnshire. Here he was persecuted for "scrupling at the vestments and the ceremonies."

At length he emigrated to New England, and settled in New Boston, where for twenty years he shone as a burning and shining light. During that time he was invited to return to England, but remained in Massachusetts, and there finally passed to his eternal rest. His piety, his learning, his ministerial laboriousness, were all gigantic. His name is still revered on both sides the Atlantic. His commentary on Ecclesiastes, and that on the Song of Solomon, are strongly marked by the usual characteristics of the author; vigour, originality, earnestness, and an evangelic strain.

John Cotton treats the Song of Solomon thus:—

"His (Solomon's) scope is to describe the estate of the church towards Christ, and his respect towards her, from his own time to the last judgement." (P. 2.)

The author displays great ingenuity in working out this idea, but we are by no means convinced that he has proved it to be the mind of the Spirit in the book. Still, the reader will be struck with the obvious originality of the whole conception. We trust, indeed, that this goodly volume will have many readers.

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*The Works of George Swinnock, M.A.* Vol. III. Containing the latter portion of the Christian Man's Calling; Heaven and Hell Epitomised; and a portion of the Fading of the Flesh. Pp. 472. Imperial 8vo. Edinburgh: James Nichol and Co.

WE have great pleasure in introducing the third volume of good George Swinnock's works to our respected readers. Of the first and second volumes we have already spoken, and the third has only heightened our favourable opinion of the man, his spirit and theology. We cordially thank Mr. Nichol for introducing us to the acquaintance of George Swinnock, for we confess, that to us, his writings were perfectly strange until this splendid edition of them appeared. Henceforth, however, Swinnock will become one of our study companions. He is a writer who will repay attention. We give this precious passage abbout heaven:—

"Death will ease the soul of this trouble (temptation): as in heaven there shall be no tinder of a corrupt heart to take, so no devil like steel and flint to strike fire. The crooked serpent could wind himself into the terrestrial, but shall never creep into the celestial paradise. His circuit is to go to and fro in the earth; he cannot enter the confines of heaven. When he fell from his state of integrity, he left that place of felicity, and cannot possibly recover it again. The saints on earth, indeed, are militant, fighting with him, but the saints in heaven are all triumphant, wholly above him:—"More than conquerors, through him that loveth them" Rom. viii. 37. There the children of God are gathered together, and no Satan among them; there the Son of David delivereth his true Israelites from all their fears of this uncircumcised Philistine. When the heavenly Mordecai comes to be a chief favourite in that high and holy court, he shall be freed from all his frights about this enemy and

adversary, this wicked Haman. The Ark and Dagon could not stand together in one house, much less can light and darkness, Michael and the Dragon, God and the Devil, dwell together in one heaven." (P. 239.)

How rich this brief paragraph is in interesting scriptural allusions! but this is only a fair sample of George Swinnock's ordinary style. We trust our readers will read him for themselves.

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*A History of the Free Churches of England, from A.D. 1688, to A.D. 1851.* By HERBERT S. SKEATS. London: Arthur Miall, 18, Bouverie Street, E.C. 1868. Pp. 638.

THIS is an invaluable contribution to modern Ecclesiastical History. The style is clear, terse, and sententious; often witty, but ever dignified; while the matter is marked by large, and, so far as we have examined, accurate research. All Mr. Skeats' sympathies are with progress and freedom, but he knows how to judge charitably even the persecutors of bygone ages. We have been especially struck with the calm and dispassionate style in which he discusses this most exciting topic. Though himself a Congregationalist, he bears this noble testimony:—

"It is the singular and distinguished honour of the Baptists to have repudiated from their earliest history, all coercive power over the consciences and the actions of men with reference to religion. No sentence is to be found in all their writings inconsistent with those principles of Christian liberty and willinghood, which are now equally dear to all the free Congregational churches of England. They were the proto-evangelists of the voluntary principle. The author is not connected with the Baptist denomination; and has therefore, perhaps, greater pleasure in bearing this testimony to undoubted historical fact." (P. 24.)

The publisher has not shown us the courtesy of sending us a copy for review, but the sterling value of the book induces us to bring it under the notice of our readers. No library will be now complete that does not contain this volume. Ministers might advantageously form classes of their young people, for the study of its thrilling contents. Nonconformist parents, too, should see to it that their older children are familiarised with the phases of our national ecclesiastical history that are therein recorded. This knowledge will strengthen them in their Nonconformity. Mr. Skeats has placed the whole religious world under obligations deep and manifold, by the production of this noble volume.

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*George Fox, the Friends, and the Early Baptists.* By WILLIAM TALLACK. London: S. W. Partridge and Co., 9, Paternoster-row. 1868. 8vo. Pp. 196.

THIS is a deeply interesting book, written, we believe, by a Friend. It traces the doctrines and constitution of "Quakerism" mainly to the early Baptists. That there is a very close affinity between the respective tenets of the parties, Mr. Tallack has made obvious. The resemblance is, indeed, striking. All who are interested in ecclesiastical research will, we are sure, be delighted with this book. It will make an admirable appendix to Mr. Skeats's larger work. The study of such volumes is pre-eminently suited to the present state of public opinion, and to the great questions of the day.

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BRIEF NOTICES.—*Sinful and Righteous Heresy.* A Sermon by JOHN ALDIS, of Reading. London: Elliot Stock. Pp. 16. Price 3d. A calm, sober, and dignified justification of our Nonconformity; well worthy of perusal.

*Ireland and Her Agitators.* By an Irish Wesleyan Minister. London: Elliot Stock. Pp. 34. Price 4d. Hardly up to our stand-point, but still a very hopeful brochure on the subject for a *Wesleyan* Minister.

*The Fixed Character of God's dealings in Nature and Grace, in this life and in the life to come.* Lessons from the treating of the Paralytic. By Rev. GEORGE ST. CLAIR, of Banbury. London: Elliot Stock. Pp. 16. Price 2d. This *Sermon*, (we suppose,) was printed by order of the Oxfordshire Association, and was worthy of publicity. It is an able, instructive performance, but would have been improved by a larger infusion of the evangelical element.

*Images in the Windows of Churches; Protest against them.* By GEORGE ROCHFORT CLARKE, M.A. London: Seeley and Co., Fleet-street. Price One Shilling. The best protest against images in church windows, and every other "mark of the beast," is to "come out from among them, and be separate from them." Those who go to "church" deserve all they get there.

We have received and cordially commend the following additions to Baptist Tract Society's Tracts.

No. 335, *Thoughts for the New Year.*
„ 336, *Two Pictures.*
„ 337, *Up, and be doing.*
„ 338, *William Mills.*
„ 339, *A Sailor's Hope.*
„ 340, *Scotch Ales.*
No. 341, *The Power of Prayer.*
„ 342, *John Newton.*
„ 343, *Deathbed Scenes.*
„ 344, *Martyrdom of John de Backer and Wendelinoet Klaas.*
„ 345, *Our Heavenly Father.*

Also, *Memoir of Mrs. Mortimer, Is Romanism Christianity? An Earnest Word against Theatres, Negro Life and Mission Work at Camerons.*

Also, the following Magazines, &c.: *The Church, The Appeal, The Scattered Nation, The Watchmen of Ephraim, The Methodist Quarterly, The Gospel Magazine, The Sower, The Little Gleaner, Old Jonathan's Hymn Book with the Monmouthshire and Yorkshire Association, Letters for the Year;* the former on Excommunication, and the latter on Denominational work.

# Intelligence.

## SAXONY.

MY BELOVED BROTHER PARKER.—Is it not a very good thing and also one of the many mercies of our God, that though we are separated from each other many miles and by a deep ocean, we are enabled to converse with each other? And must we not admit that it is God, the great inventor of all arts, who taught men to write, to read, to print, and so on; and should not therefore these arts ever be employed in his service, for from him and for him they are.

Fully four weeks are now gone since I reached my home again. The Lord has been very good and kind towards me, he gave me a fine passage and the joy to find my family and all the members of our churches preserved in spiritual and bodily health. I myself felt rather weak and disposed to some rest, but there was no time for it; the churches had been waiting already for my services, the stations were expecting my visits; orders of books, as Testaments, tracts, &c., had to be sent off; so I thought of doing first of all the necessary work and look for some rest afterwards. So fully I was engaged that, though I intended to write to you before this, I could not find an hour's time for it till to-day. But the best thing I rejoice to say—and to say it to the praise of the Lord—is that by the continued work and activity I got better, recovering my voice and full health and strength again to go on in the Lord's service, and I am sure you too will thank with me the good Lord for my restoration to health, because it is an answer not only to mine but also to your prayers and the prayers of all our Saxon friends in England. Still often I think of my last tour in England, and the hearty kindness with which I was received in your house and everywhere. The many good impressions I received among all the friends with whom I was privileged to meet are still quite fresh in my soul and have become a stimulant to me to praise the Lord and to be the more devout and active in his service. Greatly I desire to express on this occasion my heartiest thanks to you, as well as to all the churches, pastors, and brethren who so kindly entertained me. I never can repay the good I received, but the Lord, whose riches are "unsearchable," will pay my debts, and he will pay you and all to the fullest satisfaction.

One of the first and chief stations here I visited of late was Magdeburg, where we received in a church meeting two applicants for membership; the one of them had been awakened by a sermon I preached in a place seven years ago; they were both baptised in the river Elbe. On the Sunday following I was in Altenburg, where, according to an invitation I had sent round on the stations in the kingdom, the most of the members living there assembled to a conference. The Lord Jesus was with us and did send us a day of special blessings. After the early prayer meeting I conducted the morning service and preached on the evangelical salutation: "Grace be to you," &c. (Eph. i. 2). We considered first, From whom this salutation comes: from God himself, as the proper writer of the Bible. Second, To whom it is offered: to "the saints and the faithful in Christ Jesus." Third, What it contains and offers: "grace and peace,"—blessings which we need most of all, and which make up for all others. In the afternoon service I preached on "the great use or advantages of Christianity" according to Paul's declaration—"Godliness is profitable unto all things," &c. After the services we went out of the town to a certain water to bury with the Lord a young convert of his. There were a good number of spectators present; may they, having heard and seen the truth, soon believe it and obey it! On our way home one of them already expressed his desire to be baptised soon, and in relating his conversion, asked if I remembered preaching last winter in L. on the birth of Jesus, which sermon had been the means of his awakening. After the Lord's Supper in the evening we had a lovefeast which kept us up till late at night, and which was attended by a number of friends and inquirers. Besides preaching in various places, I was engaged with solemnizing marriages, attending funerals, visiting the sick, receiving and sending away in smaller parcels, tracts and pamphlets, and attending to the school.

*The spirit of persecution* in the kingdom of Saxony has not ceased yet, as an instance I would mention the arrest of Brother Baumgärtner, a missionary in the East of Prussia, whom I had invited last winter to visit our churches in Saxony; he now says in a report of this visit in our German Mission newspaper:—

"Wednesday, the 22nd of April, I went on the request of Brother Geissler to Meerane, in Saxony. It was to visit our members in this town, and to hold a meeting there. At the appointed hour a number of hearers assembled in the house of Brother K. After singing and prayer I preached the apostles proclamation:—"This is a faithful saying," &c. (1 Tim. i. 15). The hearers were attentive, and in accordance with their desire I after the meeting conversed a little longer with them and taught them the truth "God is faithful," &c. But what happened? At once there entered two policemen and came up to me asking, besides a series of questions, for a passport. Happily I had a good Prussian passport with me, but notwithstanding that, I was demanded to go with them. Every excuse was in vain. I was taken by them to the senate-house. Here I hoped to get a fair hearing, but instead of that, it being late at night, they took from me my watch, money, note-book, and every thing I had in my pockets. Then there came a jailor with a lantern and a bundle of keys, whom I had to follow. He led me across a bridge in a side-building down stairs into one of the lowest cells for thieves and murderers. Here I had to stay till the next afternoon at two o'clock. A sister had got permission to hand to me a breakfast in the morning, and at noon I was supplied by the jailor with a small portion of potatoes. When at two o'clock they fetched me I was asked a number of questions, and then, having received back my watch and what else they took from me, I was dismissed with the warning never to preach again, as the Baptists were not recognised by the State as a religious body. Before I went I expressed my astonishment at my treatment here in the best of causes, and my sorrow about such a state of things in Saxony, mentioning the liberty we enjoy in Prussia; but the answer I got was simply that all they had to do was to send me off, and all I had to do was to go. With the next train then I had to leave the town, and with it the kingdom of Saxony. A policeman was on the Station to see me off safely."

At the conclusion of his report Brother B. speaks of the necessity of having some more labourers in Saxony,

as also in Altenburg, where he likewise held a meeting when the police interfered. We have already given this brother an invitation to come to us, and he is ready to do so, if we could give him the necessary salary. The churches here have already promised a part of it, as much as they can do, and hope that soon our English friends will come to our assistance.

Brother Lehman, sen., from Berlin, whom I had invited to visit my churches during my stay in England, has also been arrested in the kingdom and been sent across the frontier.

In a few weeks I intend, the Lord being willing, to commence a Mission in Dresden, the capital of this persecuting kingdom. I hope the Lord will protect me and prosper our work. But will you kindly accompany and help us with your prayers? We look and long for the time when all "the kingdoms of this world—also the kingdom of Saxony—are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever!"

With the heartiest salutations to all who will join us in this prayer. I am, yours for ever,

MORITZ GEISSLER.

*Halle, July 16th*, 1868.

## BAPTIST ASSOCIATION OF IRELAND.

THE annual meetings of this Association were held in Coleraine, on May 25th, 26th, and 27th. The proceedings were opened by a sermon preached by the Rev. W. Eccles, from Amos vii, 2—"By whom shall Jacob arise? for he is small."—considering, first, the low condition of the church of Christ; second, its enlargement? third, the means by which this is promoted; and, lastly, the encouragements to labour for it. The roll of members was then called, and the following were elected as office-bearers for the current year:—the Rev. C. Kirtland, secretary of the British and Irish Home Mission, president; the Rev. R. M. Henry, of Belfast, secretary; William Hastings, Esq., of Belfast, treasurer. The members of the committee for last year were re-elected. It was then arranged that the Pastoral Circular Letter to the churches for this year, should be written by the Rev. W. Eccles; subject, "The Relation of Baptist Principles to the Evangelisation of Ireland." It was also agreed that the next sermon before the Association, should be preached by the Rev. Percy F. Pearce, of Coleraine, with the alternative of the Rev. D. Macrory, of Derryneil.

On Wednesday morning, devotional exercises were conducted from ten to eleven, after which, the business of the Association was resumed. The church recently formed at Whitehouse, was then proposed for admission to the Association, and duly received; the pastor, Rev. A. B. M'Gowan, being added to the roll of members. The Revs. Dickson and Jackson were invited to assist at the deliberations of the Association. The Circular Letter appointed to be prepared at the last annual meeting, on "The Claims of Ireland on the Irish Baptist Churches" was then read by the Rev. J. Douglas, of Portadown, and, after being adopted, was ordered to be published and circulated among the churches. Letters from the various churches in connexion with the Association were then read by the pastors, giving a very encouraging account of the progress of the denomination during the year. Notices of motion were afterwards brought forward by the Revs. M'Master and Macrory, and it was decided that in future, two sermons be preached at the annual meetings. The Association, after adjournment, met again at four p.m., when it was arranged that the next annual meeting of the Association be held in Dublin. A communication from the secretary of the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland, on the subject of National Education, requesting the opinion of the Irish Association on the matter, was laid before the meeting by the Rev. R. M. Henry, and it was agreed that it be referred to the consideration of the Interim Committee, with instructions to report to next Association. Another communication from the committee of the "Pastors' Augmentation' Fund Society," was also referred, with similar instructions to the committee of

the Association. The following resolutions were then proposed and unanimously adopted by the Association:—1.—"That this Association feeling that, in the present circumstances of the churches in this land, a special door has been opened, in the providence of God, for the evangelisation of Ireland, and sensible of the peculiar claims of their native country on Irish emigrants, deem it highly desirable that a deputation should be appointed to visit the States of America, and urge upon the sympathy and support of Christian brethren, the claims of Irish missions." 2.—"That in furtherance of this object, and in concurrence with the committee of the British and Irish Home Mission Society, they would depute as their representative from this country to America, the secretary of 'The Association of Baptist Churches in Ireland,' the Rev. R. M. Henry, of Belfast, and would hereby cordially commend their esteemed brother and his mission, to the kind regards and support of their Christian brethren in the United States." At seven p.m., the business of the Association was resumed. During the sederunt, the question of religious endowments in Ireland occupied the attention of the meeting, and after lengthened consideration, it was agreed to refer the matter to a subcommittee to prepare some resolution for the adoption of the Association.

On Wednesday, after the usual morning meeting for prayer, the Association resumed proceedings at eleven a.m., and in pursuance of the arrangement of last sederunt, a declaration of the sentiments of the Association on the subject of religious endowments was submitted to the meeting, and adopted. In this document the ministers and delegates of the Baptist Church in Ireland express their unanimous disapproval of all state endowments of religion, and their steadfast adherence to the principle of the voluntary support of the ordinance of the gospel. After votes of thanks had been passed to William Tough, Esq., Troy, New York; to J. B. Woolley, Esq., of London; to the pastor and members of the Baptist church, Colcraine; and to the office bearers of the Association, the meetings of the Association were closed by prayer. A missionary conference, convened by the Rev. C. Kirtland, was then held, and very interesting details of missionary labour and difficulties were given by the agents of the Irish society. In the evening of the same day, a sermon was preached by the Rev. G. Malins, of Dublin.

On Thursday Evening a public meeting was held, at which James L. C. Carson, Esq., M.D., presided, and addresses on important practical subjects were delivered by the Revs. D. Macrory, of Derryneil; R. Eccles, of Ballymena; S. J. Banks, of Banbridge; T. Berry, of Athlone; and William Tough, Esq., of Troy, New York.

## NORTH WESTERN ASSOCIATION.

The annual meetings of this association were held in the Orchard-hill Baptist chapel, Waterbarn, on Wednesday and Thursday July 1st and 2nd. The attendance at the various meetings and other services was large. The first meeting was held on Wednesday afternoon for the reading of the letters from the churches. Mr. Samuel Howorth was elected moderator. The letters from the churches were read. Mr. James Cox read a paper on the subject of education; the writer advocated the establishment of denominational schools, aided by Government grants. The Rev. J. Smith said he dissented from the conclusions of Mr. Cox. A great deal had been done by voluntaryism, but he did not think that they, as Baptists, had done their duty in this respect. What was to be done in the matter? If ignorance was the mother of so much vice and crime, and if prevention was better than cure, they then saw great need of every effort being put forth for the education of their children. If denominational education should be spread by State aid, he could not see much difference between schools receiving State support for the spread of their denominational principles, and the pulpits which were supported from the same sources. As Baptists, they ought to set their faces against receiving any

help from Government for the support of their denominational schools. The Rev. H. Dowson could not approve of Protestants receiving State aid for the spread of their principles. If they were to assent to such a thing, they might be sure what church would receive the lion's share. The Church of England would get the lion's share; and there were their Wesleyan brethren, who were always ready to receive help, let it come from what quarter it might, would not be far behind. Then there were their Independent friends, who would put in a large claim; and they, poor Baptists, would have to go to the wall. He urged the Baptists not to compromise their principles. Rev. J. Bloomfield, Mr. Harvey, and others, spoke in a similar strain. After Mr. Cox had briefly replied, a vote of thanks was passed to him for the paper he had read, it being understood that the association did not approve of all the sentiments contained in the paper. This brought the meeting to a close. In the evening public worship was held, when the Rev. J. Smith (Bacup) preached. The services on Thursday were commenced by a morning prayer meeting, at seven o'clock; it was largely attended, and an able address on the subject of "prayer and watchfulness," was given by the Rev. Isaac Brown, of Deals. At half-past ten o'clock, the meeting for the reading of the circular letter to the churches was opened by devotional exercises; after which, the Rev. H. Dowson, president of the Bury College, read a very able and interesting letter. In the afternoon, a business meeting was held; it was addressed by Mr. Oncken, from Germany; and a resolution in reference to the Irish Church was passed. At half-past six o'clock, the final service was held, and the Rev. J. Bloomfield, of Bradford, preached an excellent sermon from Gal. iii. 1. After this service, a collection was made in aid of the association fund, for the benefit of poor churches, and the service concluded by singing and prayer.

## HASLINGDEN.

On Lord's Day, July 19th, the anniversary services were held in connection with the Baptist Sunday School, Pleasant-street, Haslingden. In the morning an address was delivered to the young by James Barlow, Esq., of Accrington. In the afternoon and evening sermons were preached by the Rev. W. Walters, of Newcastle-on-Tyne. The school numbers 431 scholars and 60 teachers, making a total of 491. The management and progress of the school are in a satisfactory state. On Monday evening, July 20th, Mr. Walters delivered a lecture on "British Philanthrophists." The collections amounted to £69 8s. 3d.

## SCHOOL AND CHAPEL ANNIVERSARY.

On Lord's Day, July 19th, two able and encouraging sermons were preached in the Baptist Chapel, Little Leigh, Cheshire, by the Rev. E. Parker, of Farsley. Collections were a little over £28. On the following Tuesday, the children had their annual treat. There was also a public tea party, and in the evening a public meeting, consisting of recitations by the children, and speeches by Revs. E. Parker and A. Spencer the pastor.

## OPEN AIR SERVICES AT ONSTON.

On Lord's Day, June 28th, there were held the Baptist open air services at Onston. These services were, as usual, conducted in a field near the Baptist chapel, when the attendance was even larger than on previous occasions in past years, more especially in the afternoon and evening. The weather proved very agreeable for an out-door gathering, which induced many to attend from a distance. The principal preachers, as announced, were Mr. Harvey from Bury, and Mr. Lockhart from Liverpool, whose earnest and powerful addresses were listened to with manifest attention by their numerous hearers. They were supported and assisted by several local gentlemen, and the services were much appreciated by those who attended.—*From the Northwich Guardian.*

## SCARBOROUGH.

THE Rev. Samuel Couling having recently declined to accept the invitation to the pastorate of the Baptist Church at Bedale, and having also resigned his connection with the Scarborough Town Mission, after six years engagement, he is now open to an invitation from any Baptist church with a view to the pastorate. His address is still Scarborough.

## BAPTISMS.

OGDEN, NEAR ROCHDALE. — June 15th, two believers were baptised by the Rev. L. Nuttall.

WAINSGATE.—June 7th, four; by the pastor, Mr. Bamber.

KILMARNOCK, N. B.—July 12th, two; by Mr. Stobo for the church at Irvine.

## MARRIAGES.

COX—ANDERTON.—July 30th, at the Baptist Chapel, Cloughfold, near Rawtenstall, by the Rev. Abraham Nicholls, of Sunnyside, Mr. James Cox, book-keeper, Stacksteads, son of Mr. James Cox, of that place, to Miss Hannah Anderton, of Bacup, in Rossendale, Lancashire.

CHADWICK—SMITH.—On the 16th June, at the Tabernacle Baptist Chapel, Blackburn, by the Rev. R. Cameron, Rev. John Chadwick, pastor of the Baptist Church, Milnsbridge, to Isabella Smith, youngest daughter of Mr. Miles Brown, Astley Gate, Blackburn.

## DEATH.

DIED, suddenly, while at Richmond with a party of friends, on Tuesday, August 11th, Mr. Joseph Briscoe, of Banner-street, Finsbury, in the 78th year of his age. The deceased was for many years a deacon of the Baptist church, Lever-street, St. Luke, where the loss of him will be especially felt. His affectionate family deeply feel the bereavement, yet rejoice to know that "absent from the body," he is "present with the Lord."

[A brief obituary will be inserted in our next.—ED.]

## RECEIVED FOR THE SAXON MISSION.

### MR. GEISSLER.

*Quarmby.*

| | £ | s. | d. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Mr. John Haigh | 0 | 10 | 6 |
| Mr. George Walker | 0 | 5 | 0 |
| Mr. Alfred Walker | 0 | 5 | 0 |
| Mr. Ben Haigh | 0 | 5 | 0 |
| Mr. John Lawton | 0 | 2 | 6 |
| Mr. John Pearson | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Mrs. George Walker | 0 | 2 | 6 |
| Mrs. Joseph Walker | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Mrs. Bray | 0 | 1 | 3 |
| | £1 | 14 | 3 |

## RECEIVED FOR THE BAPTIST TRACT SOCIETY.

By the TREASURER.

| | £ | s. | d. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Miles Illingworth, Esq., Bradford | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| Rev. J. Hobson, London ....S. | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| W. J. Haynes, Esq., London ....S. | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Mr. J. C. Woollacott, London ....S. | 0 | 10 | 0 |
| Lieut. Col. J. Campbell, Woolwich..S. | 0 | 10 | 0 |
| Blandford Street Auxiliary ....S. | 0 | 10 | 6 |
| Mr. Cousens, Buckhurst Hill ....S. | 0 | 10 | 6 |
| Rev. E. Merriman, Dorchester....S. | 0 | 2 | 6 |

By Mr. WHITEHEAD.

*Weymouth.*

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Mr. A. Dennis ....S. | 0 | 7 | 6 |
| Mr. J. Humphrey....S. | 0 | 5 | 0 |
| Mr. E. Robens ....S. | 0 | 5 | 0 |
| Friend | 0 | 2 | 6 |

*Abingdon.*

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Rev. W. T. Rosevear ....S. | 0 | 5 | 0 |
| Mr. A. A. Parsons....S. | 0 | 5 | 0 |
| Friend | 0 | 2 | 6 |

*Southampton.*

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Rev. G. H. Holland....S. | 0 | 10 | 0 |
| Robert Ritchie, Esq....S. | 0 | 10 | 0 |
| Mr. John Grace....S. | 0 | 5 | 0 |
| Two Friends, 2/6 each | 0 | 5 | 0 |

*Reading.*

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Rev. John Aldis ....S. | 0 | 5 | 0 |
| Philip Davies, Esq....S. | 0 | 10 | 0 |
| G. J. Stephenson, Esq. ....S. | 0 | 10 | 0 |
| J. G. Brown, Esq....S. | 0 | 5 | 0 |
| Philip Davies, Esq....S. | 0 | 5 | 0 |
| H. Clayton, Esq. ....S. | 0 | 5 | 0 |
| Mr. T. C. Williams ....S. | 0 | 5 | 0 |
| Mr. John Kidgell ....S. | 0 | 5 | 0 |
| Mrs. Dean ....S. | 0 | 5 | 0 |
| Mrs. Collier ....S. | 0 | 5 | 0 |
| Three Friends, 2/6 each | 0 | 7 | 6 |

*Oxford.*

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Mr. Robert Grubb ....S. | 0 | 5 | 0 |
| Mr. J. S. Steane ....S. | 0 | 5 | 0 |